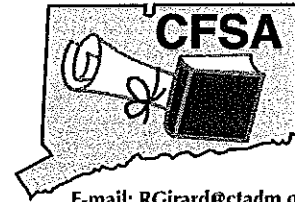




CONNECTICUT FEDERATION OF
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS
AFSA - AFL-CIO



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Roch J. Girard
President

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Vice-President

Michael Yamin
Secretary

Dr. Jane Pertillar
Treasurer

March 16, 2009

To: Senator Thomas Gaffey
Representative Andrew Fleischman
And
Members of the Education Committee

From: Roch J. Girard
President

RE: Testimony on Today's Bills.

Raised Bill No. 939: AAC Educator Certification.

This bill has within its content troublesome and far reaching implications for educators and individual school districts. The propose date of July 1, 2014, though it sounds far off, is not that far away. We hope that the colleges are geared up for this due date in terms of teacher preparation. Teachers must be trained and prepared to teach students with "diverse learning needs, including students with disabilities; English Languages learners; gifted and talented students; as well as students with achievement delays". Though not stated, this refers to the blended or "integrated " certification requirements in which many practioners, who served on the Committee for Certification Regulation Revision, voiced serous professional concerns in terms of making all teachers "special education teachers". We recognize the need for an increased skilled based teacher - better educated and trained at working with a divergent student population. However, that does NOT make all teachers "special education teachers". A doctor is a doctor, but there are many fields and specialist as a doctor-(podiatrist, brain surgeon, cancer specialist, etc.). Given the practical realities of the many special needs of children in our schools, how can we make all new teachers "special education teachers" ? We believe that a special education teacher has a calling to serve special needs children. Just as doctors have specialization fields, so should teachers.

In the area of CEU's this bill would raise CEU credits from the current 90 credit hours to as many as 150 hours. Again the advisory committee thought we had an understanding

that the increase would NOT occur, in that the issue from the practitioners was the QUALITY of the CEU's offered and not the QUANTITY of CEU's needed. Furthermore, this bill virtually gives the SDE almost complete control of Professional Development in all school districts. Educators and LEA's should have a say- a check and balance- in what PD is needed in their districts and not turn this important and professional requirement to a "bureaucracy".

In recent testimony on Raised Bill No. 6392, before the Program Review and Investigations Committee on February 28, 2009 we voiced similar concerns/ language in that bill.

H.B. No. 6655: (Raised) AAC State Grants and Building Projects.

We wholeheartedly support this bill. Having followed the appropriate process in securing grants and school building projects they should now be authorized. Hopefully some of the federal "stimulus money" can be allocated to these projects, lessening the tax burden on our state taxpayers.

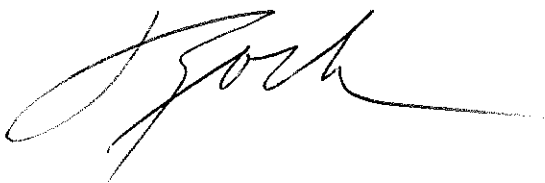
Raised Bill No. 6656: ACC Special Education.

We strongly support his bill. This tiered approach to increase or provide additional funding to the excess cost grant will be of great help to the LEA's. Given the horrific economic realities faced by the LEA's we urge passage of this bill.

Raised Bill No. 6667: ACC Voluntary Regionalization of Certain School District Services.

We hear much today about the need to consolidate services. Where school districts can merge services without negatively affecting schools and student services, we would be in favor of such merging of services. The added grant increase to the communities involved in the merging of services is a positive enticement and incentive.

Thank You.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Josh" or similar, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.